

# EXHIBIT 24

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF MARYLAND**

STATE OF MARYLAND; STATE OF  
DELAWARE; STATE OF CALIFORNIA; STATE  
OF COLORADO; STATE OF ARIZONA; STATE  
OF CONNECTICUT; DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA,  
STATE OF HAWAI'I; STATE OF ILLINOIS;  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR *ex rel.* Andy  
Beshear, in his official capacity as Governor of the  
COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY; STATE OF  
MAINE; COMMONWEALTH OF  
MASSACHUSETTS; PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF  
MICHIGAN; STATE OF MINNESOTA; STATE OF  
NEVADA; STATE OF NEW JERSEY; STATE OF  
NEW MEXICO; STATE OF NEW YORK; STATE  
OF NORTH CAROLINA; STATE OF OREGON;  
JOSH SHAPIRO, in his official capacity as  
Governor of the COMMONWEALTH OF  
PENNSYLVANIA; STATE OF RHODE ISLAND;  
STATE OF VERMONT; STATE OF  
WASHINGTON; STATE OF WISCONSIN;

Plaintiffs,

v.

CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND  
COMMUNITY SERVICE, operating as  
AmeriCorps; and JENNIFER BASTRESS  
TAHMASEBI, in her official capacity as Interim  
Head of the Corporation for National and  
Community Service;

Defendants.

Civ. No. 25-cv-01363 (DLB)

**DECLARATION OF JOHN CORY CONNOLLY**

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746, I, JOHN CORY CONNOLLY, hereby declare as follows:

1. I am a resident of the State of Michigan. I am over the age of 18 and have personal knowledge of all the facts stated herein, except as to those matters stated upon information and

belief; as to those matters, I believe them to be true. If called as a witness, I could and would testify competently to the matters set forth below.

2. I serve as the Chief Climate Officer in the Office of Climate and Energy (OCE) within the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE). In this role, I am tasked with leading the work of the OCE and its staff. I have held this position since December 20, 2021. The OCE coordinates Michigan's response to climate change across state departments and agencies, and provides guidance on climate change mitigation, adaptation, and resiliency strategies. As the head of the OCE, I oversee the implementation of Governor Gretchen Whitmer's MI Healthy Climate Plan, a roadmap to achieving economy-wide carbon neutrality by 2050.

3. A key initiative in our efforts to implement the MI Healthy Climate Plan has been the MI Healthy Climate Corps, a service program dedicated to building capacity in communities across Michigan to implement local solutions to address climate change. The program also develops an enduring, capable network of climate and clean energy professionals committed to serving communities and building a more sustainable future for Michigan. Planning for the MI Healthy Climate Corps kicked off in August 2023, and the service program was in operation continuously since March 21, 2024, until we were notified of a "stop work order" on April 28, 2025.

### **MI Healthy Climate Corps**

4. The first cohort of the MI Healthy Climate Corps launched statewide in March 2024 with 30 members dedicated to an eight-month mission to implement local solutions to address climate change and meet the goals of the MI Healthy Climate Plan, serve Michigan communities, and bolster the state's clean energy and sustainability workforce. Two positions served EGLE and

the OCE, supporting internal capacity and coordination abilities at the state level. Other members in the first cohort served in the following communities and host organizations:

- Ann Arbor: Washtenaw County Facilities Management Department;
- Bellaire: Antrim Conservation District;
- Detroit: Detroit city government, Detroit 2030 District, Detroit Future City, Let's Grow Michigan, Michigan Saves, Regional Transit Authority of Southeast Michigan, and Transportation Riders United;
- East Lansing: East Lansing city government;
- Elk Rapids: Elk Rapids village government;
- Flint: The Everly Collective;
- Grand Rapids: West Michigan Environmental Action Council and Calvin University Plaster Creek Stewards; Ingham County: Spartan Housing Cooperative;
- Kalamazoo: Kalamazoo city government;
- Lansing: Lansing city government, Clean Fuels Michigan, Lansing Board of Water & Light, League of Michigan Bicyclists, Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity, and Michigan Department of Natural Resources Office of Public Lands;
- Marquette: Marquette County government and Superior Watershed Partnership;
- River Rouge: City of River Rouge Community Development Department;
- Traverse City: SEEDS Ecology and Education Centers and East Bay Charter Township government; and
- Waterford Township: Oakland County government.

5. The second cohort of the MI Healthy Climate Corps launched statewide on December 3, 2024, with 31 members dedicated to an eleven-month program to implement local solutions to address climate change and meet the goals of the MI Healthy Climate Plan, serve

Michigan communities, and bolster the state's clean energy and sustainability workforce.

Members in the second cohort were serving in the following communities and host organizations:

- Ann Arbor: Washtenaw County Resilience Office;
- Detroit: Community Housing Network, Detroit 2030 District, Eastside Community Network, Wayne County Sustainability and Innovation;
- Eastpointe: City of Eastpointe;
- Grand Rapids: Calvin University Plaster Creek Stewards, City of Grand Rapids, Grand Valley Metro Council, Michigan Sustainable Business Forum;
- Kalamazoo: City of Kalamazoo;
- Lansing: Let's Grow Michigan, MassTimber@MSU, Michigan AFL-CIO Workforce Development, Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, Michigan Economic Development Corporation, Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) Environmental Support Division, EGLE Office of Climate and Energy, EGLE Office of the Environmental Justice Public Advocate, Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity Community and Worker Economic Transition Office, Michigan Department of Natural Resources Office of Public Lands;
- Macomb: Macomb County Planning and Economic Development;
- Marquette: County of Marquette, Michigan Environmental Council, Northern Michigan University, Superior Watershed Partnership;
- Mason: Ingham County;
- Sault Ste. Marie: Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan; and
- Traverse City: Groundwork Center for Resilient Communities, Michigan Office of Rural Prosperity, SEEDS Ecology and Education Centers.

6. The MI Healthy Climate Corps made a significant contribution to Michigan's climate mitigation and resilience, workforce development, and environmental justice goals before its sudden suspension. Since its inception, the MI Healthy Climate Corps: expanded public transit, promoted food waste reduction, and helped protect shoreline ecosystems; assisted low-income and

underserved communities in accessing resources for energy audits, home weatherization, and local climate solutions; and provided skilled, full-time capacity to nonprofits, local governments, and universities, many of which relied on Corps members for key program delivery. As of April 25, 2025, MI Health Climate Corps members have served 59,897 hours statewide since the inception of the program. Corps members gained hands-on leadership experience, participated in professional development, and earned benefits like health coverage and education awards.

7. Overall, MI Healthy Climate Corps members implemented projects that made communities more resilient, such as developing a guidebook for climate-related workforce programs, developing proposals for city-owned solar projects, supporting green infrastructure, and reducing food waste. Graduates of the program transitioned into climate-related careers, illustrating the MI Healthy Climate Corps' role in building a skilled, climate-ready workforce aligned with Michigan's clean energy job growth. At least 13 members of the first cohort found employment in a climate-related field and six members returned for a second service term. Members, in many cases, helped guide underserved communities toward state and federal resources, advancing equity in climate adaptation and clean energy access. Initiatives contributed to the implementation of the MI Healthy Climate Plan, supporting its goal of a carbon-neutral economy by 2050 through localized action and capacity building.

8. The MI Healthy Climate Corps was consistently given vital support and funds from AmeriCorps, through the Michigan Community Service Commission (MCSC). For the current grant year, EGLE was awarded \$864,000 in federal funding for the MI Healthy Climate Corps program, and this money was critical to the program's operation. Member costs including living allowance, healthcare, and member-support cost (FICA). A small amount covers administration

costs for the MCSC (corporation fixed percentage). Because the Federal funding covers the member costs, it is critical to achieving the goals of the MI Healthy Climate Corps program.

**AmeriCorps grant termination and impacts on MI Healthy Climate Corps**

9. On April 27, 2025, EGLE was informed by Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO) officials that they had been notified by AmeriCorps concerning the termination of the EGLE program. In addition, at 5:35 PM EDT on Monday, April 28, 2025, I received via email a notification from the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO) that the Trump Administration had terminated Michigan's AmeriCorps funding as of April 25, 2025, and, as a result, LEO had no choice but to issue a "Stop Work Order" to stop all work related to this program, effective immediately.

10. Without the AmeriCorps grant funding, EGLE may be forced to end the MI Healthy Climate Corps program for the current cohort and future cohorts. The MI Healthy Climate Corps program's budget for this year relied on AmeriCorps State funding, and EGLE had made plans and allocated funding for a contract with our Program Operator, the Community Economic Development Association of Michigan (CEDAM), supplies, member training, member stipends, marketing, and travel based on the anticipated receipt of Federal funding promised.

11. Shutting down the MI Healthy Climate Corps has caused significant disruption to critical community projects, such as mobility access programs, energy efficiency projects, public transit expansion, and food waste reduction efforts, which were abruptly halted. Projects tailored to underserved communities were stopped in their tracks, particularly those led by MI Healthy Climate Corps members who were central to organizing community events and managing implementation of local grants. Nonprofits and public agencies that depended on MI Healthy

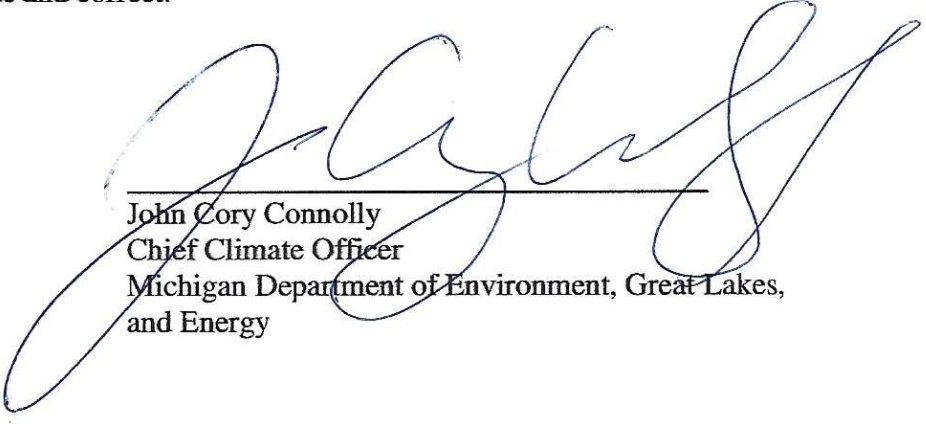
Climate Corps members for program delivery and technical assistance were left without needed capacity.

12. In addition, 31 professionals, many early in their careers, lost their positions with no warning or transition support. Members suddenly faced potential income loss, healthcare disruption, and uncertainty about their future employment, despite having committed to full-time public service work.

13. Additionally, the shutdown threatens progress on Michigan's MI Healthy Climate Plan, particularly efforts to build local climate resilience, reduce emissions, and foster a clean energy workforce.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States that, to the best of my knowledge, the foregoing is true and correct.

Dated: May 2, 2025



John Cory Connolly  
Chief Climate Officer  
Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes,  
and Energy